ADVISORY COUNCIL for the **EDUCATION** of **STUDENTS** with **DISABILITIES**

Minutes
April 13, 2015
10:00 a.m.
Scarritt Bennett Conference Center
1008 19th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37212-2166

Members of Council in Attendance

Cynthia Cheshier, Chair

Chip Fair, Vice-Chair

Brian Brown

Catherine Knowles

Cleatrice C. McTorry

Darlene Walden

David Craig

Dawn Bradley

Gayle Feltner

Hillary Sims

Jason Vance

Kyle Hauth

Mary Meador

Paula Brownyard

Shannon Taylor

TDOE Employees in Attendance

Nathan Travis, Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Steve Sparks, TDOE – AC Contact

Tabatha Siddiqi, TDOE – AC Contact

Amy Owen, TDOE

Bill Wilson, Office of General Council

Crystal McCarver, TDOE

Gary Smith, TDOE

Lacey Hartigan, TDOE

Lori Nixon, TDOE

Mary Batawalla, TDOE

Rachel Wilkinson, TDOE

Susanne Keefe, TDOE

Theresa Nicholls, TDOE

Tie Hodack, TDOE

Members Not in Attendance

Alfred M. Hacker

Chantal Hess-Taylor

James Topp

Jeff Ker

Mary Johnson

Visitors in Attendance

Ned Andrew Solomon

Rhonda Thompson

Sherry Wilds

Meeting Focus/Purpose *To provide policy guidance with respect to Special Education and Related Services for children with disabilities in TN*

Announcements from the Chairperson   Cynthia Cheshier

- ❖ Introduction of council members
- ❖ Thank you to the TN Department of Education for the January Partners in Education (PIE) Conference
- ❖ Bill Wilson introduced Crystal McCarver, the new IDEA Complaints Investigator
- ❖ Council goals 1, 2, 7, and 8 have been updated
- ❖ Must work on goals 3, 4, 5, and 6
- ❖ Information must be submitted to Steve Sparks by April 20, 2015

Approval of Current Agenda

- ➢ **Action Item** – Council member, Jason Vance, made a motion to approve the agenda, with the change on the By-Laws vote. The motion was seconded by Council member, Mary Meador.

- ➢ **Final Action Taken** -
  The Council unanimously voted in favor of approving the current, January 12, 2015 agenda.

Approval of January 12, 2015 Meeting Minutes
See AC website for January minutes
(http://www.tennessee.gov/education/student_support/special_ed/sped_advcouncil_minutes_2015_jan.pdf)

- ➢ **Action Item** – Council member, Brian Brown, made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Council member, Hillary Sims.

- ➢ **Final Action Taken** -
  The Council unanimously voted in favor of approving the January 12, 2015 meeting minutes.

AC By-Laws Revisions Vote

- ➢ **Action Item** – Council member, Hillary Sims, made a motion to adopt people first language into our by-laws. The motion was seconded by Council member, David Craig.

- ➢ **Final Action Taken** -
  The Council unanimously voted in favor of adopting people first language into the by-laws.

TDOE Initiatives

<u>Overview of the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase I</u>   Amy Owen
(AC Goals 6 & 7)
- ❖ Have completed Phase 1
- ❖ Phase 2 is due in February 2016
- ❖ Improvement Strategies
    1) Ensuring Students have time, in the least restrictive environments, with appropriate supports
    2) Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²)
    3) Instructionally Appropriate IEPs

<u>Partners in Policy Making Leadership Institute for the TN Council on Developmental Disabilities</u>   Ned Andrew Solomon
- ❖ Program established in 1993
- ❖ To date, there have been an estimated 500 graduates
- ❖ Leadership, advocacy, self-advocacy training for adults with disabilities and family members of people with disabilities
- ❖ Average 30 participants per year
- ❖ The program is seven weekend sessions, September through April
- ❖ Chip Fair graduated on April 11, 2015
- ❖ Brian Brown, and his wife, are also graduates of this program

<u>Annual Performance Report (APR)</u>   Rachel Wilkinson
(AC Goal 6)
- ❖ Submitted in February 2015
- ❖ Comments have been returned and clarifications are due on April 16, 2015

<u>LEA Determinations Process (draft of changes)</u>   Rachel Wilkinson
(AC Goal 6 & 7)
- ❖ Leadership Team met to discuss scenarios
- ❖ By using the most recent growth data, for the different indicators, we hope to make more current, informed, and relevant determinations
- ❖ Local determinations should be sent to districts by mid-May 2015
- ❖ Will display the information in ePlan
- ❖ Will include an APR section which has their actual data for each indicator
- ❖ Tie Hodack, Theresa Nicholls, & Rachel Wilkinson will be working on what type of support will be supplied to districts who are identified as needing assistance and what training will look like for the coming year

<u>Tennessee Flexibility Waiver</u>   Mary Batiwalla
(AC Goal 3)   Lacey Hartigan
See AC website for distributed documentation
(http://www.tennessee.gov/education/student_support/advisory_council.shtml)

- ❖ Worked on the ESEA Waiver Proposal
- ❖ Senator Alexander and Senator Murray came out with a draft of what could be a reauthorization

- ❖ There has been no reauthorization since 2002
- ❖ Reauthorizations usually last 10 years
- ❖ Moving away from TCAP and into TNReady
- ❖ Current waiver expires at the end of summer 2015
- ❖ Two parts of the system: Achievement Determinations and Gap Closures.

Lunch (provided)

TDOE Initiatives – continued

Response to Explicit Instruction and intervention   Tie Hodack
for Behavior (RTI²-B) Grants
(AC Goal 8)

- ❖ Looked for vendors, with existing contracts, who could help us build a framework which is more sustainable, and build capacity across the state, to get services to LEAs that are more equitable. Principal investigators will be:

    1) University of Tennessee Knoxville – Sarah Moore
    2) University of Memphis – Renee Murley
    3) Vanderbilt University – Eric Carter

- ❖ Working on the contract scope now and plan to have the contracts through the approval process by the end of May
- ❖ Determined that many other states have a framework which include behavior, mental health and anti-bullying.
- ❖ Question from the council – Will there be parents on the taskforce? Yes.

Collaboration for Effective Educator Development,   Tie Hodack
Accountability and Reform (CEEDAR)
(AC Goal 4)
See AC website for distributed documentation
(*http://Ceedar.education.ufl.edu/*)

- ❖ Applied to CEEDAR Center for technical assistance, which address how to collaboratively bring general education and special education together to get better outcomes for students. Areas of focus:

    1) Teacher education programs
    2) Revising licensure standards
    3) Refining personnel evaluation systems
    4) Aligning policy structures
    5) Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

- ❖ Focused on licensure standards this year
- ❖ Concentrating on all five focus areas next year

- ❖ $235,000 in funding over three years

Accessibility and Accommodations for TNReady   Lori Nixon
(AC Goal 3)
See AC website for distributed documentation
(http://www.tennessee.gov/education/student_support/advisory_council.shtml)

- ❖ In 2015-16, we will be transitioning to a new test for Title I, an assessment of Math and English Language Arts (ELA)
- ❖ It will replace our current TCAP and End of Course for ELA and Math
- ❖ The new assessment is called TNReady
- ❖ TNReady is an online assessment with a brand new review for accessibility
- ❖ Our accessibility focus is for English learners and students with hearing, vision, and/or physical impairments
- ❖ Moving away from the achievement and end of course designation
- ❖ Science assessment will not change in the coming year
- ❖ New social studies assessment this school year
- ❖ **Question from the council – Where will the parent letter be posted?** We have posted the memo to EasyIEP. The sample letter will not be posted to EasyIEP. The letter will be posted, by next week, on the TNReady website. The sample letter will explain that an accommodation change, which is statewide, does not necessarily mean individual IEP teams have to be convened. However, the district is responsible for letting parents know and the parent has a right to request a meeting.
- ❖ We want to focus our decision making around accessibility features and accommodations. To focus on access.
- ❖ **Question from the council – Is the paper based an accommodation or can a school decide to do paper based?** There are two ways a student can have a paper based test. 1) If the district is not technology ready, which will be determined by a survey our logistics team will send out. 2) Through the unique accommodation process as an accommodation for a student with a disability.
- ❖ **Question from the council – Will there need to be an IEP meeting for each student?** A statewide accommodation change means you do not have to have individual IEP meetings. However, you do have to inform the parent.

New Business/Additional Items

Advisory Council Fact Sheet   Catherine Knowles
(AC Goal 7)   (AC member)

- ❖ Would like to have the council's input and draft a fact sheet, to be presented at the next Advisory Council meeting.
- ❖ It would be helpful to have alternate phone numbers and resources to refer people to in order to help them with their issues when the Advisory Council does not have jurisdiction to make a definitive decision.
- ❖ Add a resources section
- ❖ Add a frequently asked questions sheet, with scenarios

- ❖ Should include a definition and parameters of the open forum
- ❖ Catherine Knowles will start a rough draft and then garner suggestions from Goal 7 group (Darlene, Ryan, Chip, and Catherine)
- ❖ Submit suggestions by mid-June
- ❖ A vote to approve the fact sheet will be held at the next meeting, July 13, 2015

Call for future meeting suggestions   Chair
(i.e., agenda items, meeting invitations, solicitation of input)

- ❖ An email will be sent to council members asking for agenda items
- ❖ Maybe have council member members report on their background and what they do
- ❖ Need an update on Goal 5
- ❖ Have the new Commissioner come and present
- ❖ Annual report, for 13-14, is due in June to the Governor's office
- ❖ Cynthia Cheshier will send out a reminder email, within the next month, about the council goals reminding people to submit their council goals
- ❖ Goals are due, from the January meeting, by April 20th

Next Meeting   July 13, 2015
(Meeting 1 of FY2016)

Adjourn